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The Master Profession

A Challenge to the Young Men of the Twentieth Century

BY

SMITH BAKER, D.D.

AND

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TO

Young Men

WHO MEAN TO LIVE WHILE THEY LIVE
AND TO MAKE THEIR LIVES
WORTH WHILE

"I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong."

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FOREWORD

Rev. Smith Baker, D. D., preached in the Central Congregational Church, of Atlanta, Georgia, from October 1, 1907, to March 1, 1908. The writer heard him several times, and often heard of him and the remarkable impression he made in the city. That impression remains months afterwards. His four months in the pulpit of this church will be permanently reckoned among the formative forces of the life of this strong and growing church.

At seventy-two Smith Baker is preaching the best sermons of his fifty years in the ministry. He is young as the youngest, and his youthful force at seventy-two has in it all the energy of fifty years of growing strength.

Seeing all this, and knowing the cry that is going over the country from all denominations for more and more efficient ministers, the

writer urged Dr. Baker to write a book on "Pastoral Experiences, or Why, if I Were Again Twenty, I Would Choose the Ministry as My Life Work." Chapter IV of this book was his response to this request. "I can not tell these personal things," he said. Finally, chapter II and then chapter III were drawn out of him.

Then the writer decided to try to complete the plan he had in mind the best he could, and the result is chapters I and V. But the real book is Dr. Baker's three chapters.

The men of the churches are ready for new, manly activities. There is a clear call from them for leadership.

The old activities of the church have largely spent their force in producing modern Christendom and civilization. A new Christendom and a better civilization demand new activities. God and man call for a larger and stronger and more vital ministry—for leadership equal to the needs and opportunities of this vigorous century.

Ministers must be men among men; fundamental thinkers among specialists; men of moral and spiritual energies directed to the uplifting of all that is truly human.

Here is the challenge to the young men of to-day. F. E. J.

THE MASTER PROFESSION

1. THE WORK TO BE DONE

According to the Genesis story the human race began its history in a Paradise. Sin came and Paradise was lost.

But Paradise is to be regained. The whole round world is to be the Paradise of the human race in its Golden Age yet to be. The lost likeness is to be restored, line for line, grace for grace, beauty for beauty. Dominion over self is to be restored and then dominion over all the earth and all that moves upon it. The thorn and the brier are to go; the fir-tree and the myrtle-tree are to take their place. The sighing of creation is to cease, and singing is to be heard in its stead. Warfare is to issue into peace; sorrow into joy.

"Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is heaven," is a prayer to be an-

swered on this earth in the history of man. The law of love is to be humanity's universal law written in all hearts and lives.

It is a gigantic enterprise. It means calling forth the secrets of nature and making them the common property of mankind. It means harnessing the forces of nature and making them obey man's hands upon the reins. It means distance as a hindrance to man's largest living annihilated. It means the touch of man's fingers enforced with the might of Niagara and the thunderbolt, and with the taste and skill that paint the lily. It means remedies for all ills; supplies for all needs; power for all achievements.

More than this, it means a transformed humanity.

Mankind—all races and tribes—is to become intelligent. Nature, self, and God are to be apprehended by all. The practical forces of life are to be comprehended with the largeness and the glory of it.

Human brotherhood is to be universally

recognized. "All ye are brethren" is to be the realization of all peoples. The governments are to be resolved into a theocratic democracy. Government of the people, by the people, and for the people, must be of, by, and for a people who have enthroned God in their intelligence, heart, and conscience, so that He rules in their free acts.

All social relations are to have selfishness eliminated and love their supreme law. Capital and labor are to find a method of living together in the unity of brotherhood. Racial, sectional, and sectarian hatred are to disappear. Evil and injurious habits and practices are to be given up. Unsanitary conditions—physical, mental, moral, and spiritual—are to be displaced by sanitary conditions, and environment is to be perfected to human needs and possibilities.

Sin, as moral guilt, as missing the mark of life, and as a destructive force, is to be expelled from the human will and constitution, and humanity is to stand forth in the image

of God triumphant and uplifted. It is a noble program. How is it to be accomplished?

2. THE AGENCY

In the fullness of time, God gave the agency. His Son became incarnate and dwelt on earth full of grace and truth. He gave His message; He set forth His ideal; He went to the Cross and made it the manifestation of His and the Father's love. He showed in actual life what the spirit of true life is, and should ever be. He then withdrew into the unseen and sent His spirit to become incarnate in His disciples. He organized His church and committed to it the work He had begun. Through its members it is to make disciples of all nations, to initiate them into the common family of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and to teach them to follow from their hearts all His teachings as to real, abundant life.

It became "the permanent organ of society's life." Modern civilization is its best product so far; but its work is only just begun. It

is to keep performing its assigned part until the program of the world's progress is completed, and society is brought to its full salvation, to its larger life, to its ultimate earthly glory. Heaven opens before the individual worker as he drops out of his earthly place, but it comes as the result of the earthly possession and practice of the heavenly spirit.

Twelve men, increased by Jesus' and the twelve's personal activities to one hundred and twenty, have made modern history and the possibility of a future Golden Age. Energized by the coming spirit, they were multiplied into thousands and then millions. Their pathway through the world is the only pathway of life and light that has been. All else of human doings is stereotyped, unprogressive, dead or dying.

Twelve men have produced a quiet revolution which has become an irresistible evolution whose issue is to be perfected humanity.

The church has been imperfect; but it has been the best and has produced the best there

has been. It has not always lived up to its ideal; but its ideal has become progressive humanity's standard. Its own teaching is calling far in advance of itself, "Come on to the standard."

It has to adjust itself in organization and methods to each changing age, but sooner or later it leads to better things.

The church in the early years of the twentieth century finds that it has largely spent the energy of its old methods. Its teachings are far ahead of it. A revival of righteousness has leaped beyond it. It is looking around in some bewilderment. Men's clubs, laymen's movements, leagues, classes, etc., multiply.

The church is getting its bearings and preparing for new and larger activities than ever before. A few years hence and the whole world will vibrate with a new energy. All the sweetness and penetrating power of a feminine Christianity will remain, as it ought to, while there will come the sturdy, vigorous, resounding blows of manly consecration. The men of

the church who have caught a vision of the manly Christ will arise to make disciples of all mankind and bring them to the high standard of Christ.

3. THE POWER

Human conditions must change to the ideal in the actual, and the gospel is the only power that can do it. But the gospel that can do it is no namby-pamby, get-to-heaven-when-you-die sort. It is the power of God unto salvation—the casting out of all that is foreign to true living and the bringing in of all that belongs to triumphant, abounding life. It is no mere stand-up or lift-your-hand-and-be-saved variety; but the placing of divine power and love in the heart—the fountain-head of all life. It brings a new formative principle into all thought, feeling, purpose, and activity. It is adapted to the actual nature and needs of man, and transforms by its living, never-ceasing power. It is evangelical, but in no narrow, unmeaning sense. It is good news, pres-

ent and active, instructive, guiding, energizing.

4. THE LEADERSHIP

The leadership of the church, the transforming organization of the ages, is the ministry. The minister is called Bishop, because he oversees the work of the church; Pastor, because he guides, protects, and feeds it; Teacher, because he instructs it as to the truth; Evangelist, because in its name he goes to the outside world with the message of life; Minister, because he watches for the needs and possibilities of the people, and sees that the first is supplied and the second heeded; Elder, because he is to exercise well-tried wisdom for those in need of it; Steward, because to him are committed the grace and power of God; Priest, because with his fellow priests in the membership of the church he is to stand between God and lost men representing God to them and them to God until they are reconciled; Prophet, because he is to proclaim the

will of God to individuals, to communities, and to nations.

It is the master profession. It inspires and teaches the fundamental principles of everything. It presents ideals to all—men, women, children; educated and uneducated; rich and poor; sick and well; people of ten talents and of one; the leaders and the followers; the aggressive and the acquiescent. It teaches the meaning of human government and its great principles; the place of business and how it can be glorified; the social life and how it may be exalted; scholarship and how it may contribute to human weal.

A great ministry will make great lawyers, physicians, teachers, business men, home-makers, statesmen, philanthropists, investigators, etc. It does not teach the details of any, but it gives impulse and inspiration to all. General medical practice is now a specialty, administering to minor health needs and knowing where to send all greater needs for the special skill needed. The ministry is the gen-

eral practitioner who impels and guides all to their specialist and specialty in life.

It takes a large man to fill well such a profession. The twentieth century must have large men in the ministry; men with a vision, men without selfishness, men who can achieve. The clerical society dude, the finically nice man, the mere essay-writer, the mere rhetorician, the glib wordmaker — all these have had their day in the ministry. The twentieth century calls for a vital ministry; for men who will make their personalities—trained, developed, consecrated, charged with the love of humanity and the power of God—tell on human conditions for their transformation into divine ideals. The vital ministry is a doer in the fullest sense, but it is far more. It is an inspirer of doers in every department of life. It is a leader of the manifold ministries of the church. The minister of the twentieth century must especially lead men into activities for the uplifting of all peoples and all classes. He must inspire a new world leadership. He

must lead men to see religion with its cant cast out, its littleness gone, its false standards overthrown, its largeness displayed. The religion he teaches is the source of true living and working; the gospel he preaches is the power that makes possible the art of living according to its science. From every point of view the true ministry is the master profession.

II.

HOW TO FILL THE PEWS

By SMITH BAKER, D.D.

A few people attend church by the force of their own spiritual life, regardless of the ability of the preacher. Any religious service that is loyal to Christ is precious to them.

Others attend service from a sense of duty. They may not enjoy the preaching, but they believe in religion, in the church, and feel they ought to attend; and long after the preacher has failed to interest them, they continue the habit from loyalty to the church.

A few others attend because they have been brought up to do so—it is the respectable thing. These three classes comprise the vast majority of those present in the most of our congregations.

The Roman Catholic Church has its large congregations not from the great spirituality

of its members or their particular interest in religious truth or the superior talent or eloquence of its preaching; for, as a rule, it falls far short in culture or eloquence of the Protestant pulpit, but from the exaltation of the church as an institution in the minds of its people. Loyalty to the church rather than spirituality or interest in religious truth or the talent of the preacher is what calls out the majority of Roman Catholic worshipers.

Protestantism holds no whip over its members; it comes with no assumed church authority. Its influence is all moral, intellectual, and spiritual; hence, its power to draw people depends upon how much it reaches the mind, heart, or spirit, one or all of these parts of man's nature. It does not compel; it influences. Thus, it can not trust to the authority of the church, or the idolatry of the mass, but to such a presenting of the truth as shall touch the intellect, the heart, and the spirit of the man. Hence, it requires more of a man to be a good minister than it does to be a

good priest. The strength of the Protestant church to reach men who are not spiritually or personally interested in religious questions depends upon the social, sympathetic atmosphere of the church and the power of the minister as a preacher, but mainly upon the ability of the man in the pulpit. It may be this ought not to be true; but it is, and because this great fact has been forgotten, far too many churches have failed to reach the masses. There is a fundamental truth in the saying, "Fill the pulpit and the pews will be filled." President Tucker has said, "The severest criticism upon any man's preaching is empty pews." That church and that preaching are not a success which only draw the spiritual people who would come anyway, or those who come from a sense of duty. The business of the preacher is not simply to preach the truth, but so to preach it as to reach and interest those who have no religious interest in it.

The pulpit should not only hold the fort,

but make constant conquests upon the world. The most important part of preaching is not to build up the church, but to reach the unsaved. The preacher's most anxious question is not, "Am I satisfying the church?" but, "Am I reaching the outside world?" "How many people who have not been in the habit of attending church are being induced to come?"

The preacher should be a drawing speaker —a popular preacher—a minister whom sinners love to hear. Do not start at these words. The expression, "A drawing preacher," has been used in sarcasm by little men to justify their own dullness. No expression has been more abused than "popular preaching." People have sneered at it as undignified and almost a reproach, but no other preacher was ever so popular a speaker as Jesus Christ. The multitudes hung upon his lips, not only because of what he said, but because of how he said it. Paul and Peter were popular preachers whom the masses followed. Augustine and St. Francis and Luther and Wes-

ley and Whitefield and Edwards and Payson and Simpson and Beecher and Spurgeon and Parker and Brooks were all popular preachers. The cry against popular preaching is generally an attempt to apologize for tame preaching.

Such sneering is contemptible. All men can not be great preachers like those named above, but every man can be interesting or else he ought to resign. Dullness has no excuse in the pulpit. It is either the result of laziness or a lack of spirituality or of natural ability.

Popularity does not mean sensationalism in the common use of that word. Here, again, there has been a vast amount of cheap talk about sensationalism in the pulpit, as though it was a common fault and a common demand, neither of which is true.

The truth is, there is very little sensationalism in the pulpit. Take the Saturday papers of Boston or New York or Chicago or Atlanta, when there are from seventy-five to a hundred pulpit notices, and not one in fifty will have a sensational topic. While there is

now and then an exception, the preachers of our church are surprisingly free from sensationalism. It is time such nonsense were done; for forty-nine out of fifty preachers are free from it. True sensationalism in the sense of calling attention by the interesting or striking way in which the truth is presented is not only right, but a sacred duty. This does not require resorting to novel methods or topics, but only a proper artistic way of securing attention. The few men who resort to the cheap sensationalism, clap-trap methods, have only a short success and gain no real power; while the most popular preachers, men who draw outsiders and reach the people and fill the pews, are those who, as a rule, cleave to the old gospel and preach the great fundamentals.

The most popular preachers are not superficial, but the most of them are such men as have deep convictions upon eternal realities. There is nothing so popular as good public speaking, and there is no kind of public speaking so popular as preaching when rightly

done. "Dull as a sermon" is a slander caused by lazy or unconverted preachers. The greatest eloquence in the world has been in the pulpit. The vast majority of the finest public speaking in the world to-day is in the pulpit, and the greatest opportunity for the highest and broadest oratory is still in the pulpit. A pulpit on fire has always filled the pews.

A pulpit on fire to-day will fill the pews. We do not mean more noise or nervousness or only an appeal to the emotions, though preaching which does not reach the emotions is poor stuff. We mean the truth on fire in a man's soul—not simply believed in the head—blazing out of the heart. The weakness of the pulpit is cold preaching. A pound of coal on fire will heat a room more than a ton piled into an artistic display. Some ministers do not know the difference between the truth in the head and the truth in the heart. They are forever in the clouds with intellectual perceptions but with no spiritual experience. Many of them think that intellectuality is spirituality.

They look wise and use high-sounding words, and talk about the objective and subjective of the inner consciousness, while the starving people say, "How spiritual!" But such men know no more of the power of the spiritual life than an old maid knows about the reality of a mother's love.

The preaching which draws must not only be intelligent and sincere, but it must be an outburst of a new life in the soul. Such preaching fills the pews. A man need not be great or learned; but the preacher should be an interesting speaker. It is only mental or spiritual laziness which makes any preacher dull. While we are confident that as a whole no class of men are more sincere or work harder; yet laziness is the sin of the pulpit, laziness in preparing and laziness in preaching—a languid, stupid, unemotional delivery. Sometimes it is an excess of ministerial dignity. A self-conscious manner seems to say, "I am the minister, look at me!" When a man simply makes the sermon a bridge with which to span the Sabbath

or a professional performance, people will not come to hear him. Young men sometimes say, "Oh, give me an opportunity and I can preach!" Six people are an opportunity great enough for any man. It is not the congregation which makes the preacher, but the preacher who makes the congregation. A man who can not hold a small country congregation could not hold one in the city. A man who can not increase a country congregation could not hold a city audience. Let a young man double the congregation at a country cross-roads, and a village church will hear of it and call him. The secret of failure is not little congregations, but little preachers in the pulpit. All this may seem harsh, but it is true. There are so many churches where there would be no congregation but for the few faithful people who attend from religious principle.

A man may not be learned or profound, but he can be in earnest. If he can not, then he ought to resign. If the people are no less in a community, be it country or city, a village or

a missionary region; that is, if there are just as many people to be reached as there were three or five years ago, but the congregation is growing less; that preacher should step out. A declining congregation is God's call for a man to try some other field.

The only evidence that God has called a man to preach is that he can hold the people. Churches and missionary societies are not for the support of inefficient men. No matter how good a man is, if he can not do the work that needs to be done, let him step to one side and another have a chance. We repeat, a man need not be a great man; but God and the people have a right to demand that he be an interesting man.

Since commencing this paper, we have heard a man in a fashionable place of resort preach to a church full of intelligent people. There was not a new thing in the sermon, not a profound thing, only as all the gospel is profound. There was not a brilliant thing; the man's voice was poor, his theme was common-place, and there

was no display of learning; but from first to last one thousand people listened with unfaltering interest, because the man was interesting. His subject had taken possession of him, his mind, his heart, his body, and he preached as though the fate of the universe hung upon his presentation of the parable of the leper.

Such preaching people will go to hear. It fills the pews. When the minister honors the people, the people will honor the service by coming.

A young minister went from a village pastorate to a city church. There came the usual question of the evening congregation. He was anxious to reach the people upon the street. He sent and obtained six pictures illustrating the "Pilgrim's Progress" and gave six lectures. More people came out. At the close of the sixth lecture, he went to his room, asking, "What shall I do next? I can not keep up this religious show," and a more serious night he never spent. The conviction entered his soul with burning power, "What

am I here for? Is preaching a failure? Is it not my business to preach and so to preach that people will hear?" Upon his knees he resolved he would not give a mere prayer-meeting talk or kind of sermonette or a sort of lecture, but that he would honor the evening as the morning, put as much brain, heart, and prayer into the evening as into the morning; yea, as he wished to reach the outside world he would, if anything, put more consecration into the evening than into the morning service. A more serious burdened night of consecration he never spent. It was a turning-point. No more second-place or magic-lantern substitutes, but the best he had for the evening. Thus, he launched forth. No one knew what a travail of soul it cost; but the evening congregation commenced to increase and became larger than those of the morning; the house could not hold the people, and for thirty-seven years, the matter of an evening audience has settled itself. As a rule, they have been larger than those of the morning.

As he has filled the pulpit the pews have responded. The evening sermons have been born of anxiety. He has never entered the pulpit without trembling, sometimes almost crawling upon his hands and knees into it. There has been no attempt at profundity of thought or literary finish; but only letting a truth take possession of his soul and asking Christ to help him send it home into the hearts of those who came; and people have come, and outsiders have been reached.

We must not disregard natural law in spiritual life. We must not ignore the natural laws of art in Christian work. The truth is not enough, the Spirit of God is not enough. We must speak the truth in the best manner and give the Holy Spirit the best art to use. It is the sermon that must fill the pews. The humblest country pastor has the finest opportunity of any artist in the world. The preacher's duty is to reach the people. That is his business. It will cost work and prayer and travail of soul, but it is his mission. Not any

one can reach all the people, for Christ did not; but He was popular, the common people heard Him gladly. Reach the people. As Dr. Austin Phelps used to say, "Reach the people, with classic periods if need be, but reach the people; with finished rhetoric, if you can, but reach the people." Fill the pews. Here is the importance of the preacher being a good speaker, and of intensity in the pulpit.

Good speakers have no difficulty in finding pulpits. The pulpits seek them. The men who are called from the country to the large villages and come from the larger villages to the cities, are not called because they are better men, more pious, or better educated, or can write better sermons, but almost wholly because they are better speakers. Our brethren in Chicago and Brooklyn who fill the great pulpits are not there because they have any more spirituality or know any more than the rest of us, but because they know how to speak, and the reason three-fourths of the ministers are compelled to leave their churches in the

country, village or city is not because of anything in their character or culture, but because they do not fill the pulpit.

Nor do good speakers have difficulty in getting their salary. The people will pay for good speaking. The question of the payment of the salary is three-fourths of the time in the hands of the minister. This does not mean that every preacher can be a great preacher—a star, nor does it mean that any preacher need resort to oratorical—or sensational—or undignified methods in speech. The people do not demand, yea, do not want, such preaching, and the men who succeed and rise in the pulpit do not, nine-tenths of them, use such methods; but the churches do demand and have a right to demand good speaking, and no minister has a right to be a dull speaker. His art, his business, his duty is not only to preach the truth but to so preach it that the people will be interested. Dullness in the pulpit with all the issues at stake, is wicked. Better say one truth so that the people will listen and

remember than to say twenty things so that they will forget them. In our boyhood we had for a pastor a most excellent old minister, a graduate of Harvard and who studied under Dr. Emmons. The good old man was learned and wrote excellent sermons, but he was tame as tame could be. In the little village there was a Baptist church, and our church and the Baptist had no sympathy. One Sunday the Baptist minister immersed half a dozen converts by cutting a hole in the ice. Our good old father Davis could not stand that, and the next Sunday he preached upon the impropriety of such an act. He woke up, he quite shook the pulpit. No eye failed to watch him or ear to hear him. When we returned home mother said to father: "If Parson Davis loved sinners as much as he hates the Baptists, we should have some preaching," and it was a just criticism.

Not long ago a cultured deacon in one of our larger churches wrote asking about a young man who had been recommended to

them. We wrote to him that the man was a graduate of Yale and Harvard and had spent two years across the water, had received his A.M. from Yale and his Ph.D. from Harvard and he ought to fill his bill. The deacon wrote back: "I don't care a fig for his A.M. or his Ph.D. Can he preach?"

But the most important of all is intensity —intensity of thought, intensity of feeling and intensity of manner. There is no great power without it. All great speakers have it. By intensity is not meant noise, for that may be only lung power, or do we mean nervousness, for that may be only weakness; but we mean excitement. No man ever excited others who was not himself excited, or roused others who was not himself roused. The truth must be incarnate in us, we must not only believe it but feel it. It must pour out of us and overflow, and not dribble like a little stream from a pump where the water is low. Intensity may be calm like the movement of a great river, but it will be intense all the same. No man

ever had power as a speaker who was not intense, was not excited. Mr. Beecher, the most natural, the most graceful, the most eloquent pulpit orator of our land, was excited, every part if his being, body, mind, heart and soul were stirred. Sometimes he was not intense, and then he was tame, though his emotions were so quickly stirred and his imagination so easily caught fire that it was seldom when he was not intense, but we heard him give one of his most popular lectures where every fiber of his being was wrought up and he made us cry and laugh as he pleased, and we heard him give the same lecture at another time when though the thoughts and the words were the same it was tame. He remarked to us: "I didn't get there tonight." The fire did not burn.

How many of us have heard Richard Storrs when it was like the rolling up of Alps, mountain peak on mountain peak, covered with resplendent imagry, and if you sat close to him you saw that every part of his manhood from

the top of his head to the end of his toes and the tips of his fingers were excited, tremulous with intensity and some of us have heard him when he was quite as tame as common preachers—not wrought up, no intensity. Think of Phillips Brooks not being intense! You might as well think of Niagara being a stagnant pool. Have you not watched him and seen the blood rush to his face and his hands tremble as with gigantic calmness and gigantic intensity he poured forth the convictions and emotions that were burning within him? Call up good William Taylor. His sermons biblical and practical but not great, and yet how people listened. You can not think of him as calm in the pulpit, just standing still and reading an essay. He preached all over and violated all the polite rules of elocution by the very intensity of his manner. John Hall, also the incarnation of simplicity of thought, expression and of pulpit dignity. His sermons contained nothing new, original or brilliant, but how intense he was, his whole being stirred

with spiritual earnestness, speaking as a dying man to dying men, and you went from the service with your whole spiritual nature moved. Dr. George Shepard, Maine's greatest preacher, dignified, modest as a bashful maiden, reading every word of his sermon, but his whole nature so intense with what he had to say that he was as a charged battery blazing forth his laconic sentences like thunder-bolts, moving his audience as a storm moves the trees. Charles H. Spurgeon, everything considered, the greatest Gospel preacher of the last century; his sermons not remarkable for their intellectual strength or their rhetorical finish—his personal appearance not prepossessing, not eloquent like Beecher or magnificent like Storrs or grand like Brooks, but with a tremendous almost awful spiritual intensity, as though the Spirit of God rested upon him, and he had a special call on that special day to preach that special sermon to that special congregation. We sat close to him during several sermons and while there was

the calmness of self-control, yet every muscle of his body quivered and every drop of his blood was excited as he talked like a messenger from God to six thousand people. There was the calmness of self-control, but he was excited in every fiber of his being. To use one extreme illustration from out of the pulpit, Wendell Phillips, the calmest, most dignified, most self-possessed and most eloquent reform orator of New England. You saw him stand and heard him speak to three thousand people with seemingly no more excitement than though he was holding a quiet conversation with some one man, but you sit within three feet of him as it was our privilege on two occasions and you discover that there was the intensest intensity, his whole body a charged battery, not only of red-hot thoughts but of burning passion and that his whole nature from the top of his head to the end of his toes was trembling with emotion and this pent-up intensity sent his thoughts and words like arrows into the heads

and hearts of his hearers. No man ever held or moved an audience without intensity. There must be the burning heart as well as the thinking brain. Every man when he is sincerely in love with anything is intense about that thing. Dullness, tameness in the pulpit is the lack of fire in the heart. We had a young visiting friend preach for us. His sermon was a correctly, finely written essay, as a literary production. After service we walked home arm in arm. It was evening and dark. Two young men were in front of us. One said to the other: "That preacher will be a good while dying, won't he?" And that young minister thought it strange he did not receive a call. A few years ago we attended a large convention at a summer resort and in the afternoon one of the best thinkers from one of our largest colleges gave an address which for logical construction and beauty of expression was one of the highest order, but he delivered it as he would have read it to a half dozen brethren of the ministry, with not half the

earnestness that a schoolgirl talks to her schoolmates about a feather in her hat, and as a result one-third of the people left before he was done. In the evening a young man, a stranger from the South, preached. His topic was the worth of the soul. He was not learned, or cultured. He said nothing new or brilliant, but at once you felt that he was taking possession of his subject. He was honesty and intensity incarnate. Everybody listened and we went home not having heard a new thing, but all stirred up and into the night the worth of the soul kept oppressing us. As literature it did not amount to much, but as a sermon it was great. It was spiritual intensity an overflow of the speaker's soul. That is what all sermons should be. Dullness in the pulpit is wicked. A pulpit on fire will fill the pews. When any great truth or fact or love gets possession of a man he becomes intense. No man is tame when he is intense. Years ago after church service a little eight-year-old child was walking home with us and after

quite a while of silence, in the frank, innocent honesty of a child, she said: "What lots of good you would do if you would only wake up." Such is what the most of us need to do and nowhere more than in the pulpit. Real life overflows and no great invention was ever made, or great picture painted, or great song sung or great sermon preached which was not an overflow of an intense soul.

In reaching the people, remember to whom you are preaching. Some ministers do not reach the people because they do not preach to the people. They prepare such a sermon as they think they would like to hear, or, in other words, they preach to themselves. They forget they are not the people. Other ministers preach to a select few. They prepare sermons for Esquire Jones or Doctor Brown or Judge Smith or the six or eight most intellectual people in the congregation, but such are not the people. The people are represented by the average hearer. Who is the average hearer in nineteen out of twenty of all our

congregations? Not the college graduate, not the children, but the young man of eighteen, he is the average hearer. His mind is an interrogation point. He is thinking with the times, and in the modern way. He represents the average intelligence of almost every Sunday audience in the land. Let the preacher put himself in the place of an intelligent eighteen-year-old young man, and ask, "How can I so present the truth as to interest him? How can I preach upon the great doctrines so as to interest and make them plain to that high-school boy or high-school girl?" and when you have done that, you have come nearest to touching the whole congregation. Take as a topic, "Faith," or the "Deity of Christ," or the "Atonement," and prepare a sermon for an eighteen-year-old young woman, and the whole audience will listen.

We have found that our most popular sermons which have filled the meeting-house in the evening have been sermons upon the great doctrines, with the young men in view. Young

people like to hear great themes presented on their line of thinking, and they represent the average hearer. Remember who your congregation are and preach to them and not to some ideal audience. Let the deacons go, and the old established hearers very much alone; they are not the fish you wish to catch. They, the most of them, are already caught; but cast your net for the young people who are in the current and are floating out into life. Take great truths and make them plain and give it to them red hot from out your own burning heart, and the people will come; for the people love to hear men speak, love to hear men preach, when they have something to say, and know how to say it. But the people nowhere will long hear a minister preach who has nothing to say, nor will they long hear a man preach, who, though he has something to say, does not know how to say it. Young ministers never had a finer opportunity in the history of the church, than at the present time to reveal their brains, their skill, their con-

secration, and their power as artists for Christ, in so preaching that men will come to hear. No opportunity for young men in the ministry! God pity him who thinks it. Nowhere this side of the eternal mansions is there a greater opportunity for the exercise of a man's talents, culture, and powers, than in the Christian pulpit, preaching Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.

Add to this pulpit power a warm, thoughtful love for men as men. Be also a good pastor. Some ministers are "invisible all the week and incomprehensible on Sunday." While the pulpit as a means of filling the pews must stand first, it should be supplemented by calling upon the people, in particular, the non-church-going; for when people feel that the minister is a personal friend then they enjoy his speaking all the more. "A family-visiting pastor helps to make a church-going people." A man who is too intellectual to visit his people, needs to come down from the stars and put his feet on the ground. A man who does not love to

call upon the people has but little Christ in his heart. A parish with only a hundred families should receive three or four calls a year from the pastor; and these calls will put tenderness and sympathy and applications and freshness and anxiety into the sermons. Thus as Christ and the people fill a man's heart, there will be a reality and an unction in his speaking born of Christ and moving men's hearts; and the preacher will be the representative of the people to Christ and the messenger of Christ to the people.

III.

OLD YOUNG MINISTERS; OR THE DEAD-LINE

By SMITH BAKER, D.D.

Old young men are to be seen in every department of life, men who have commenced to die before they have reached maturity. Physically, it is a pitiable sight, a young man acting and looking like an old man. Mentally, it is a sadder sight, a tree which has ceased to grow. Some ministers commence at the dead-line. The first dozen sermons they preach after graduating are the best they ever preach. They are not so interesting after five or ten or twenty years as they were when they began. They never rise. They always remain small men, which in itself is no sin, for some of us are born to be small men; we can never be great. But though a tree is of the small kind,

it may keep fresh and have new branches and leaves and blossoms each year; so a preacher may not be a great man but he may be a new man each year.

A rosebush with new leaves and blossoms each year is better than a dying oak. As long as a man is fresh, he is young. A man never reaches the dead-line till he ceases to grow. Very many men reach the dead-line in about five years. They are never any larger. After that, people say, "What a promising young minister!" The promise never comes to pass. They are no stronger after ten or twenty years than they were at the end of five years. That time measures their limit, then they strike the dead-line. They are generally men of harmless character, what are called consistent men in their lines, men of considerable ministerial dignity and propriety of manner who pass for rather pious men—somewhat active in the little things of the ministry, rarely indiscreet; they never grow and their lives are spent in pastorates of from three to five years.

We know a man whose ministry was over forty years in eight pastorates, and his largest were his first two, a man of fine health and of fine advantages; but a friend who was in the family during the last pastorate said, the name of each church where he had lived was upon nearly all the sermons he preached. He struck the dead-line at the end of his first pastorate, for when a man commences to preach his old sermons, just as he first prepared them, he has become an old young man; he has reached the dead-line; he belongs to the past. He who preaches old sermons to save work has commenced to wither. A man may use the same text, and the same topic, and the same arguments, and quite the same illustrations, but when he simply repeats the old sermon, it is like a last-year's bird's nest. A minister has a right to use the same text and same subject but it must be a new sermon, born anew in the heart and brain of the preacher, just as a tree is a new tree each spring though the trunk, branches, and roots are mostly the same.

The mere using an old sermon to save thought and time, is laziness and has been the abomination and failure of hundreds of preachers. To work over and make over an old sermon is proper and at times a duty and has frequently given to the world the greatest sermons. The great preachers all do it, but the sermon is a new sermon each time, born again whenever preached. Whitefield repeated his sermons in that sense, but they were new and fresh each time, yea, newer and fresher each time because they had grown in his brain and heart.

Edward Everett's great oration upon Washington, which he delivered more than one hundred and forty times in the principal cities of the United States and which was considered the most finished of all American orations and which passed for the same lecture each time, was never delivered twice alike. Though the theme was the same, the ideas the same, and the illustrations the same, the words were never quite the same. In his own soul it was

a new oration each time, born again upon each occasion. Thus with every true orator as a preacher.

Nothing else will sooner dry up a preacher as a thinker or speaker than to merely repeat old sermons. It will bring the dead-line to any man. No minister can merely repeat an old sermon with power, for it is then only a recitation, a rhetorical performance. The sermon must be reborn in the preacher's mind and heart or it will lose its power. When a tree ceases to reproduce it has commenced to die. It has struck the dead-line. How many teachers and college professors always remain little teachers because they only repeat the same lessons year after year.

The preacher must constantly reproduce and create in order to grow and keep young. Hence, as a rule, the great preachers have had long pastorates, because the long pastorate has compelled constant reproduction.

At any rate, while a man ought to use his past preparation in preparing his sermons, he

is never to fall back upon such preparation as a substitute for work and anxiety. John B. Gough repeated his lectures over and over, but, as he told me, they were new lectures each time; the thoughts were the same, but they were new in the way he presented them and new each time in the anxiety of his heart.

Here is the temptation of written sermons. While it is a man's privilege and duty to use a full written manuscript, if he can preach better that way — for remember there is a vast difference between reading and preaching — here is a temptation to feel, "Well, it is all written out, and I have nothing to be anxious for, and I can draw it out any time, it is all ready." Hence the dullness of much of the old New England preaching was simply the reading of an old production, not preaching at all. If a man uses an old manuscript of an old sermon, he must preach it as a new one. It must be new in his soul, if not in his brain. Some ministers reach the "dead-line" young because after a while the act of preaching be-

comes more easy and they lose their anxiety. When a man loses his anxiety as a speaker, he has commenced to wither; he loses his emotion, his fire, his power is gone. When there is no "wake-up" in the preacher, there will be no waking up in the congregation.

Only mental and spiritual egotism is unanxious when about to preach. The humble, modest, sincere man, no matter how great his ability or culture, always trembles when he enters the pulpit. There is a spiritual dread before preaching which gives power in speaking. Because a man appears to speak easy is no sign his knees do not tremble. The bravest soldiers turn pale when they enter battle. Only the superficial man commences to preach without a burden upon his heart. Self-trust is an approach to the dead-line with a minister.

Again, some men reach the dead-line because they fall into professional ruts. They are mechanical and have the same way of doing anything, any time. They form a habit of reading or speaking or composing sermons,

and their work is like hand-organ music. They read every hymn in the same manner, read all Scripture in the same tone, make the same prayer over and over, construct their sermons on the same plan, and deliver them in the same mechanical way. It becomes tiresome to the people.

The first time you hear some men, you say, "How fine!" but the second and third time it is the same, and in a while it becomes dull for the want of variety. Ministers who would keep young and retain their power must look out for ministerial ruts. Men fall into a sameness of manner all unconscious to themselves, but the people can tell beforehand just what is coming next in the prayer, and how far the minister is in his sermon, for everything is cast in the same mechanical form.

Music and painting and all art is in the unity of variety, much more is this true in public speaking. A good housewife in preparing the daily meals has very much the same material to work with, month after month, but

she has an endless variety in the way she puts the food on the table. The potatoes and the meat are prepared in all sorts of ways, so that though they are the same kind of potatoes and meat they are served differently. Thus the minister who would keep off the dead-line must study variety in his methods and in preaching even the same old Gospel. Look out for sameness, for it revolves round the dead line.

Some ministers reach the dead-line because they do not study and study hard and think and think hard. Preaching is not easy work. The last place in the world for a lazy man is the modern pulpit. Light reading, light study, and light thinking will make light preaching. The muscles never increase in strength without hard exercise—neither will the mind.

To feed the body upon "consomme" soup and angel cake and ice-cream will not make a giant. Light reading will not make strong thinking. The mind does not become strong of itself without strong food. There must be

hard work in the study or the brain will fall back, at least, never increase in power.

A preacher to hold his own with the congregation must more than hold his own in his ability. That is, a man to preach as well to the same congregation at the end of three years must all the time preach better. When he ceases to grow he touches the dead-line.

His reading must not only mean hard reading, which makes the brain tired, but it must be various reading. While the minister is to be a man of "one Book," no other profession calls for such a variety of reading. Without that there will be a sameness in his illustrations and a narrowness in his thinking. A minister should read a little of everything that is fit to be read, from children's stories to the profoundest discussions in philosophy; not only exegesis and theology, but history, science, art, poetry, biography, politics, ethics, and fiction. Not that the minister is to be learned in all these or in many of them, but he should be more or less intelligent in them

all. To read only on one or two subjects has a tendency to make a man one-sided and partial in his thinking, as to look at one side of a mountain gives one a very limited view of the mountain. A pond into which nothing runs will soon run dry, so the mind into which something is not constantly pouring will run dry, and that is why so many preachers after a while become in their sermons as dry as dust. The freshness and sweetness of the lakes is that there are hundreds of little streams from the hillsides constantly flowing into them. Thus a variety of reading keeps the mind fresh.

Mr. Gladstone was one of the most remarkable illustrations of this truth in public life. He was, first of all, a statesman. Around that his energies were concentrated, but it was his habit to keep four or five books upon as many subjects upon his table all the time and to read a little from each and every day, and thus as with no other great man of the last century, he was not only intelligent but quite an au-

thority in science and art and literature and theology. This variety of information not only made him a broader, more rounded man, but it increased his strength as a stateman and enriched his oratory as a politician. The most of our public men are sharp and smart but narrow.

We once invited a distinguished United States Senator to give a week-day lecture to our young people, upon any secular theme he chose. His reply was that it would give him great pleasure to do so, but he must confess that he had "not read up on anything but politics and cattle shows." The preacher can not afford to be in his intelligence only a minister. Read constantly and variously and though one may not be a scholar in other than the Bible, yet his constant reading a variety, even of that which seems to have the least connection with his profession, will appropriate to itself freshness of illustration and breadth of thinking.

We call to mind a good man of more than

common natural ability who had received the usual course of education for the ministry and who upon special occasions was capable of eloquent speech, but who never remained more than four years in the same place. Visiting his home, we found that after forty years in the ministry his library consisted of less than one hundred books. He had not fed his mind and hence reached the dead-line before he was thirty. And this was not because he had no money with which to buy a book now and then, for upon a small salary he had succeeded in having several thousand dollars at interest. He had chosen to fill his pocket rather than his brain and had his reward. He was by natural gift a strong man, but by neglect he became a weak man.

We were well acquainted with another minister who was for forty-nine years pastor of the same church in an intelligent town. He had not near the natural talent of the other man and no better preparation, but in the forty-fifth year of his pastorate, one of his

best educated hearers remarked that his sermons were fresher and more interesting than they were forty years before. We frequently visited his home and generally found some new book and his library had something in it upon a variety of subjects. He had no more income than the other man but he put a part of his limited income into his brains and as a result he never reached the dead line, not even in the forty-ninth year of his ministry, when God called him to his reward.

We know how difficult it is for a missionary with a small salary to furnish himself with books. We have been there. But when there is a will there is a way, and in case a minister is so situated that he has no money for books, as doubtless there are such cases, let him borrow them. In these days and in the most obscure parish, books and magazines are present. The book and magazine are almost omnipresent. "Uncle Sam's" post-office sends them into every nook and corner of our vast domain, and though the books that a man finds

in the homes of his people may not be religious or seem to have anything to do with sermons, let him borrow them and read them. The seemingly most unlikely book will frequently suggest the best thoughts. Many a good sermon has been born from a book which had no religion in it. One of the best sermons the writer ever preached was suggested and filled with illustrations from a little book upon "Bee Culture."

If you can not find what you want to read, then read what you can find. Keep the streams flowing into the mind. Read what you can get and if you are an honest man, God will help you to use it. You may not see many new books, but an old book is new when the mind is hungry. He who starves his brain will soon reach the dead-line. On the other hand, he who reads and keeps on reading, like the man who travels and thinks while he travels will constantly have new thoughts come to him and new illustrations with which to clothe his old thoughts; in other words, he will keep young.

Another reason why some ministers reach the dead-line so soon is quite like the last. They trust to the naturally increasing facility of thought and expression. Because they can think easier and talk easier, they mistake that for growth in ability while in many instances it becomes a decline in strength. Facility of expression is frequently one of the greatest temptations to mental and spiritual idleness. The easier a man can talk the more he needs to study or his speech will become but a rattling of words. Even fluency in prayer is a temptation to the use of words without ideas, and some of what are called the most gifted prayers contain the least thought. With an increasing ease in expression there is the temptation to mere professionalism and words, words and only words, are a substitute for work and thought.

Trusting to one's gifts or to the inspiration of the occasion is an insult to the truth, the people, and to God. When a minister by some special providence is prevented from

preparing a sermon till Sunday morning then he has a right to trust in God and proceed; and if he is a true minister, God will give him special aid. But when a man neglects to prepare himself and through pure indolence goes in for a purely extemporaneous sermon, then he disgraces the profession. It is not faith, but spiritual egotism which a man may exercise for a few times, but soon it becomes to the hearers as the same "old song," and the minister all unconscious to himself, passes the dead-line and then wonders why people do not come to hear him.

Fluency is not power, it is apt to be weakness, no better expressed than in the words of great Dr. George Shepherd, who said, "Some men go into the pulpit trusting to the inspiration of the hour, thinking they are but little below the angels and come out of it little above asses." While we are to trust in the Holy Spirit as though all depended upon Him, we are to give Him the best we can to work with and use.

The prophet called down fire upon the altar but he collected an abundance of wood and arranged it in the best manner before he called upon God. Faith is no substitute for work in preaching any more than in raising corn.

We must look out that ease of expression does not take the place of ideas. Utterance is a great thing but to have something to utter is greater. When a man is simply a talker and has ceased to instruct and awaken thought, there he has come to the dead-line.

Some ministers come to the dead-line because they lose their physical earnestness. There is an unconscious physical energy about a healthy young man which is a power in itself, which calls and holds attention, and to an extent impresses the truth. This fact is not to be forgotten. There is the physical element in public speaking and nowhere more than preaching. Beecher, Spurgeon and Brooks were all examples of this. Their physical vitality had no small part to do with their power over an audience, and that physical vitality

continued with them almost to the last. They seemed like young men when in their maturity. When a man preaches as if it was hard work, or as if he was tired or weak, then he has come to the dead-line. A rested body and rested nerves; these are necessary to good work in the pulpit. When a minister continues to go into the pulpit with tired nerves so that there is no energy left in him, and his body does not wake up with his mind and his blood is not stirred with his heart, then his power will decline.

We do not put this as first, but it is true that many a minister comes to the dead-line at fifty because he has lost his physical energy. There may be the old fire in his thoughts, but there is no fire in his utterance. No man needs more to keep young in his physical nature than the preacher, for the body is not only the temple of the Holy Spirit, but the instrument of the Holy Spirit in public speech. Here is an unconscious thing. We older men do not realize our loss of energy in the pulpit. We

think we are speaking as earnestly, as intensely as ever, but we are not. We unconsciously lose our fire. This is excusable in a man over seventy, but excuseless in a minister under that age. When the physical vitality commences to wane, then the dead-line is coming.

The churches call for young ministers not because the young ministers are wiser or preach better sermons, but because they have more energy and physical vitality. When a man keeps up his magnetic force, that is, keeps his nervous energy young, then the church enjoys him at threescore years and ten. Look-out for an unconscious calmness, a lack of fire, and a resting upon what one has done in the past. Past success will not satisfy the people. When a man, because he used to do it, thinks there is no need of special effort now, he has come to the dead-line. When a man acts tired in the pulpit, then his dead-line has come. He needs either to take a vacation or resign.

The dead-line comes when a minister loses

his social sympathies. The preacher can not afford to grow old in his heart, and if he is right he will not. Some preachers soon seem to lose their interest in young people and confine their associations to the older people. The young people do not feel acquainted with them. A minister should not be boyish, but he should be a boy to the end of life. Youthfulness in an old minister is what fresh leaves are each year to an old tree. Some young ministers seem to think that being a minister classes them with the old people.

Rev. Dr. David Thurston, of Maine, a cultured minister of the old school, dignified and fastidious in his manners, preached till he was eighty-four, and after he was eighty-four he used to attend the debating societies of the young people, that, as he said, he might keep in touch with them, know what they were thinking about, and how they looked at questions.

Keep up with the young people. They will suggest more fresh thoughts, and reveal more of real, living human nature than any other

class. He who takes particular pains to develop the spiritual life of his young people will find his own spiritual life quickened, and his heart will keep young. A minister misses one of the greatest blessings to his own life as well as lessens his own influence when he loses touch with the young. He who is no longer a boy in his heart has touched the dead-line.

Then, also, not only with the young, but with society. Some ministers, as the years pass on, draw themselves more and more within themselves and take no interest in anything but their sermons and a few friends. They are good, sincere, pious men; but as the expression is sometimes used, "they are too pious," too other-worldly, and become more and more exclusively ministerial, losing their touch with common life. While the preacher can not be too spiritual, he is also to be intensely human; for not in the Roman Catholic sense, but in the true Christian sense, he is to be the spiritual brother and father of all his

congregation, old and young. All other things being equal, the strength and permanence of a pastor's service will depend upon how much the people feel he has a personal affection for each and all of them. This must be no patronizing thing, but real for all, and, in particular, for the poor and those who are not positively religious. The worst of men appreciate personal love and attention, and this personal attention, when it has been impartial, has won many a man upon whom the preaching made no impression. Many a minister has had a long and useful pastorate when his sermons have been very ordinary, all because of his warm-hearted faithfulness as a pastor.

As a member of a large number of councils called to dismiss short pastorates, we have found that in more than one-half of them the occasions for short pastorates have been lack of wise management and good sense as pastors. Want of common-sense brings the dead-line. Wise, cautious, unselfish, charitable, patient, impartial, and affectionate leadership

keeps a minister young in the hearts of his people, as well as young in his own heart.

On the other hand, some ministers reach the dead-line for want of piety. People, even those not Christians, soon lose their respect for a merely worldly and social minister, one who has no spiritual earnestness. Such an one may please by his social qualities or by his pulpit smartness for a while, but a strong, lasting hold upon the confidence, respect, and love of a people can only be secured by real piety.

Smartness has its transient power, a fine personal appearance will have a short-lived influence and a "hail-fellow well-met" will take among the unthinking for a season, but only downright serious, realness of Christian character grows stronger in its influence as the years roll on. So far as influence of character is concerned there is no dead-line in the life of a sincere spiritual man, but every year, to such an one, adds power to his words. A minister whose spirituality the world can

not respect ought to reach the dead-line before he is ordained.

And this leads to the last reason why some ministers reach the dead-line so soon, because they lose spiritual intensity in their preaching. This is one of the most subtle temptations in the ministry, that of preaching becoming merely professional. Spiritual earnestness is one of the greatest powers in the preacher. It gives a sermon of little or common mental strength great attractiveness and force. A minister upon whom the burden of souls rests as a passion is never dull; but the very frequency of preaching has a tendency to deaden this intensity unless there is an increasing spiritual life in the soul. There is no other form of speech so attractive as spiritual earnestness on fire. This more than education or culture, yea, rather with education, has been the great secret of the power of the great preachers—St. Francis, Luther, Knox, Wesley, Edwards, Spurgeon, and Brooks—this is also true with common preachers.

When the minister's spiritual life becomes cold, his pulpit power declines. Culture can not take the place of it. As soon as the preacher's spiritual earnestness commences to decline, then he approaches the dead-line; but as long as he is "dead in earnest" for souls and his heart is on fire with love to Christ, the people will enjoy hearing him. No matter how many years a man has preached, if he is filled with a "travail for souls," he will be young in the pulpit. This lack of spiritual anxiety is the greatest secret of short pastorates. When preaching becomes merely intellectual, formal, cold, with no unction, then as a result it does not touch the spiritual wants of the people, and loses its power. The longer a man preaches, the more each Sunday he needs to have his lips touched as with a live coal from God's altar. To preach as a dying man to dying men gives power and freshness.

Such a minister may be feeble in body and old in years, but he is young in love and passion, and the dead-line is still before him.

Other things being equal, mental laziness and spiritual coldness are the makers of the dead-line. A mind constantly taking in and a soul on fire with love to Christ will keep a man fresh in thought and young in heart and full of power, after the hair is white and the steps are slow. Such a man only reaches the dead-line at death. Complete consecration is a constant renewal of strength and power. They who are moved by the powers of an endless life shall renew their strength to the last.

IV.

WHY, IF I WERE TO LIVE MY LIFE OVER AGAIN, I WOULD ENTER THE MINISTRY—A TESTIMONY OF EXPERIENCE

By SMITH BAKER, D.D.

After quite fifty years as preacher and pastor in country, village and city, there comes an increasing conviction that were I permitted to live my life over, I would choose the ministry above all other professions. The following are some of the reasons, which come to me as I look over the past:

First, it is not safe to disregard the call of God. He who does it never succeeds in the end.

Second, the financial comfort. This will seem strange to many people, and I do not think it would be a consideration of any great

importance to any spiritual man; for a minister who has not faith enough to trust God and the church for his support has not faith enough to preach faith to the people. The financial consideration is in reality beneath the dignity of a serious consideration from any God-called man, and the vast majority of successful ministers have not allowed it to influence them in their decisions. But in looking back over the fifty years, I have observed and experienced that whether upon five hundred or five thousand dollars salary, no class of men live more at ease, with more than an average of the people, or are surrounded with more of the refinements of life, or suffer less for the necessities, or educate their children better, or come to old age in more comfortable circumstances than ministers. Of course, there are exceptions, but not so many or great as in any other profession. Ministers do not have as much as the richest of their people, nor are they required to live as the poorest, but for the comfortables of life, no class of men are better situated.

Third, a delightful memory, which comes as a motive to choose the same profession, is the superior intellectual privileges which attend it. No other profession compels so large or varied a mental life. The lawyer, the physician and the college professor are by the special limitations of their work, confined to a narrower range of reading and thinking. The preacher, from the very necessity of his work, in preparing two discourses each week for the same congregation composed of every variety of persons, old and young, cultured and uncultured, serious and unserious, is compelled to read more extensively and upon a greater variety of subjects that he may adapt and illustrate his theme to all the extremes of mental life in the congregation. Hence if you wish to secure a course of secular lectures for a common congregation, you will find more ministers able to respond to such an invitation than can be found in any other profession. This constant intercourse with the best minds of the past upon all kinds of subjects—religious,

social, philosophical, scientific, historical, and literary—becomes an increasing and absorbing delight, and is like so many streams of pleasure flowing into the mind, a constant source of enjoyment so that the minister's study frequently becomes an intellectual banquet-hall where he feasts upon the best thoughts of the the best minds of all ages, and sometimes he would like to remain there forever. Such is one of the natural perquisities of the ministry, the memory of which is a sweet song.

Fourth, another motive for choosing the same form of life is that of its high social character. The best society is open to the true pastor. If there are any intelligent, high-minded, noble men or cultured, refined, sweet-souled, consecrated women in the community, the pastor has free welcome to their society, and by the very nature of his office is brought into association and fellowship with them. No other person is so constantly in touch with the best-thinking, the best culture, the highest ideas and the noblest living in society as the

Christian minister. The memory of such associations with good and true men and women and their influence upon his own life are a long and delightful picture-gallery into which he looks with gladness in his soul.

Fifth, another motive for entering the same life is the opportunity of ministering to the poor, the sad, the unfortunate, the discouraged and the young. At first, these things do not always seem a joy. They look disagreeable, and frequently the minister dreads them; but every faithful pastor soon learns that some of the sweetest songs which have come into his heart have been after making calls which he dreaded to make. Yea, some of the most painful things in the minister's life make him most glad in his heart when they are done. He who turns away from a disagreeable duty loses a great blessing. Even when one has seemed to fail in helping or giving comfort, the very attempt, when prayerfully made, has brought the joy of God into the soul. Things which others call the most unwelcome duties

of the minister's life, are frequently the richest in their rewards upon his own character and wake up the most precious memories in after-years. Ah, the drudgery of the ministry! God pity such a man. He has never entered into sympathy with Christ or understood the mission of our Lord, or realized that in the spiritual life, as in nature, the sweetest flowers bloom in the most unlikely places.

Sixth, another memory, which causes one to wish the same life again, is the association with good men in their plans and works for the Redeemer's kingdom. There are no sweeter, purer, or stronger friendships than such. To meet once a month with a body of consecrated Christian men, whose hearts beat as one heart in love for the Church, and spend the evening in prayer and conversation about the prosperity of Christ's kingdom, is like lovers planning together for the prosperity of their home. Such men's hearts melt in together, they become like young brothers about a common fireside, and as the years roll

away, the momory of such seasons are among the solid satisfactions which fill the soul, causing the communion of Christ and His disciples to be more real to the heart.

Seventh, another memory, which makes one wish to live the same life is the joy of preaching. No other exhilaration or intoxication is equal to it. When a man's heart is full of the love of Christ, and of souls, and the truth takes possession of him, then to preach thrills the body, blood, nerves, mind, heart, soul and spirit. Public speaking is the greatest of all arts, and preaching is the highest form of public speaking, which brings into action every part of one's nature, physical, mental, moral, social and spiritual. Yea, when the Spirit of God uses one, then to the preacher, at least, the day of Pentecost returns with its baptism of joy. There is no excitement of the whole man deeper, higher, purer, or more intense, so that one would wish to preach every day in the year for ten thousand years. No worldly pleasure can equal that of the pulpit. The

true preacher makes no sacrifice in preaching. It is a sacrifice for him not to preach, and he looks back upon his sermons, however commonplace in construction, as mountain heaps of joy, when the Spirit of God has thrilled his soul. God pity the minister to whom preaching is cold duty, a mere intellectual performance, a matter only of instruction, or a rhetorical art. Such an one knows nothing of what it is to be on the mount with Christ. The true minister soon learns to understand how the old-time preachers with no thought of pay or home, loved to go from place to place, proclaiming the gospel of glad tidings. Oh, the unutterable joy of preaching! One would like to do it forever.

Eighth. The greatest joy a true woman has is when she kisses the new-born child God has given her. Akin to that is the joy of the pastor over souls he had led to Christ. Roll up all earthly joys together and the joy of the pastor over a new-born soul in Christ exceeds them all. To teach others the way of life,

to pray for them, to be anxious for them, and to see them come into the light and joy of salvation, brings the heart into knowledge of the meaning of the words of Christ: "There is joy among the angels in heaven over one sinner that repenteth." This is the highest pinnacle of the pastor's joy. The applause of an audience, the congratulation of friends, the memory of deeds done, are small compared to that of soul-saving. It wakes up more hallelujahs in the heart than any other one thing this side of the heavenly mansion. It is reward enough for all hard work, for all trials, for all seeming sacrifices. It is that which brings one into completest union with Christ. No man called of God makes any sacrifice in entering the gospel ministry. Such are some of the blessings which come to even a common minister during the years of his active service, and which fill his heart with blessed memories when the pastorate is given up.

Ninth. Again, when to quite half a century of pastorate ended, there come the un-

expected revelations of things concerning which he was unconscious at the time, these form a new motive for wishing to live over the same life. This unconscious fruitage constantly springing up paints the sunset skies with golden hues. During the last years, the afternoon and the evening are full of light. We note a few of these revelations. We give them not for any egotistical reason, but as experiences which have come to a common pastor, and which may comfort some man still working amid seeming discouragements, and which also may cause some young man to feel as never before the blessedness of the gospel ministry.

The writer recently passing through one of the great cities on the Pacific coast and registering his name in a leading hotel, was approached by the proprietor in a most cordial greeting, saying: "I am the proprietor of this house, and it is a great pleasure to welcome you as my guest. Twenty-five years ago, I passed through the city where you were pas-

tor, and went to your evening service; your changed my whole life. From that night I have lived with a new purpose. I must entertain you as my guest."

On the same journey, coming over the high mountains, a gentleman introduced himself, saying: "You do not know me. You never saw me but once, and then as a stranger you said you hoped that I was a Christian. I was not then, but your kind words touched me, and as I came into this far West, they troubled me till I gave my heart to Christ. I want to thank you."

At a great convention in the Middle States, after speaking, a man introduced himself, saying: "I never saw you before, but I have a message from my daughter who was once a member of your congregation in the far East, and after coming to the West, a sermon of yours which she heard troubled her until she confessed Christ. Three years ago she died, and her dying request was that if I ever saw you I would tell you of her hope and her

joyful death, and I have come ten miles this morning to give the message."

Since the writer's resignation, a few months ago, a letter from a distant part of our land came, saying: "You have forgotten me, but forty years ago I was a lad in your congregation, and when I left to find a home in the mountains you made me promise to lead a Christian life. I promised, but confess I did not mean it. The promise, however, kept coming up, and years ago I found Christ. Noticing in the paper your resignation, I felt that I must let you know that the words spoken to a lad whom you had forgotten were not lost."

Forty-five years ago, walking in my parish one morning, I met a little barefooted, ragged miss with freckled face and uncombed hair, who had mayflowers to sell. I bought a bunch, and giving her a little picture-card, I asked if she went to Sunday-school. Her quick response was, "No. Got no clothes fit." I said, "Wear your day-school clothes. You go to day-school, don't you?" She replied,

"Hain't no good for Sunday." "Yes, they are; come to our Sunday-school next Sabbath." "Folks proud up there. Don't want me." "Yes, they do; come in your day-school clothes and I will give you a book." She answered, "Perhaps." I had no thought she would come, but she did. She was introduced to a teacher who received her warmly, and though her clothes were almost shabby compared with the other girls in the class, she continued to come. Her home was one of the poorest, most shiftless and unworthy in the community. After a few months, she came and said she wanted to join the church. I was convinced that she had found the Savior, and was trying to lead a Christian life, but she was only twelve, and from a wretched family. A part of the deacons said, if we receive her we shall have trouble with her in a few years. We decided, however, that she was Christ's child and we had no right to reject her. She came into the Church. In less than a year, the roving family moved into a distant part of the

State, and soon moved again, and all track was lost of them. Many times I wondered what became of the little barefooted Jenny, and presumed that with her environment, she had gone into evil. Three years ago, after the evening service, in the city where I then preached, when the people had mostly retired, a richly-dressed, fine-appearing woman came, and presenting her hand, gave a cordial greeting. Upon confessing that she had the advantage of me, she said: "Don't you remember Jenny, who sold you some mayflowers a long time ago?" I did not at first, but soon it dawned upon me. I could not conceal my amazement, and said, "Tell me about these years." The story was that she had worked her way to an education, married a fine husband, who had become a man of wealth, had five children, all of whom were in the church, and she had just been to Smith's College, where her eldest daughter graduated. With most gracious tones, she said, "It's all owing to the bunch of mayflowers you bought of me forty-five years ago." I went home

thinking, forty-five years ago a poor, ragged girl, now a Christian mother with five Christian children, and one just graduated from college, great pay for a kind word to a poor girl.

Years ago, working on a small salary among mostly poor people, the majority of the men having no interest in religious matters, I was taken sick, and was dangerously ill for almost two months, at great cost for a special nurse, and for one and a part of the time for two physicians, who came from a distance. The salary was less than fifty dollars a month, and when the danger was past, and the friends could call, the good deacon of the church came, and offering congratulations, threw a bundle of money into my lap saying: "Your bills are all paid." I felt that the church was not able to do it, and remonstrated that I could not take it. His quick answer was: "Not a cent has come from the church, but the men who do not go to church sent this to you, asking you to accept, for they said that you had been having a tremendous hard time, and had

been trying to make their boys and girls better, and they had never helped you, and now they claimed the privilege of paying your bills." The most of these men were profane and seemingly regardless of all religion, but they appreciated work done for their homes. God and the people can be trusted.

Thus page after page might be written of illustrations of unexpected recognition of work done, but I am inclined to close with extracts from a few of several hundred letters received from all over the country since my resignation, and these extracts from the unexpected sources:

A merchant in a distant city, who was a lad in my early ministry, writes: "You have resigned. God bless you. All I am, or have, or hope to be, I owe to you."

Another: "You were the means, years ago, of uniting our whole family, both as a family and to the church. You did not realize it."

Another: "You must not leave the ministry without knowing how much, years ago,

you comforted us in our troubles, and helped us in the Christian life."

Another: "Allow one you have forgotten to confess what help you were to us in our sorrows years ago."

Another: "You do not remember me, or the words you said, but twenty years ago you started me in the Christian life."

Another: "I hear you have resigned. I want to thank you for what you did for my children years ago when they were boys."

Another: "Though a generation has passed since I have seen you, my boy has not got over the influence of your words."

Another: "I did not agree with all of your preaching when you were our pastor, but I can not let your ministerial life close without thanking you for the high ideals of life you gave our children. They have never forgotten them."

Another: "While your people are doubtless saying pleasant things of you, allow one who was a seemingly thoughtless little boy years

ago, to thank you because I never got away from your words until I came to Christ."

Another: "We want you to know that during the years since you left us, you have never been forgotten at our family altar."

Another: "Do you remember once marrying a couple of strangers, and telling them you hoped they would commence their home life with a family altar? Well, we did, and we thank you for it."

V.

THE CHALLENGE

By FRANK E. JENKINS, D.D.

Young man, your life has come out of the splendid nineteenth century to do the work of the twentieth. Into your life is wrought the energy of the ages.

Your natural impulses are altruistic. You can become selfish and sordid only by casting out the best there is in you and consenting to your own belittling. The appeal of needy humanity strikes chords that God placed in you and they will resound as long as you are true to your own constitution as it came from the hand of God.

The twentieth century with its opening vistas of opportunity challenges your better self to be true to itself. It demands, first of all, that you be a man—a large man. It then de-

mands that you be a specialist in life and do some one thing for humanity with all the ability there is in you. It demands that you cultivate your native ability until it shall have all the strength and skill you can give it. The twentieth century has no place for crudeness or crude work. It demands the trained mind, the trained hand, the steady nerve of assured skill. Business, the professions, the State, all open before you—avenues for your best activities.

But this twentieth century with its possibilities of paradise and millennium conditions before its close challenges the best of you to consider the claims of the master profession —the ministry of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Great Leader of the hosts of progress.

The physical and the intellectual get their value from the moral and spiritual. They get their immortality thus. All the activities of life get their glory in exalted and immortal character.

We need good business men, physicians,

lawyers, statesmen; we need good ministers more, for they are the character-makers and work-inspirers.

You must not accept this challenge lightly. You are asked to undertake the largest work of life. You are challenged to a life-work of skillful toil. You must know men, life, and books. You must have such a fund of information and be able to communicate it so interestingly as to draw people to hear you on themes in which they are not directly interested. From what they are interested in, you must compel their interest in the vital things of life.

If you are to do all this you must study, study, study; think, think, think; work, work, work; try, try, try. There is no royal road to this; it is work, hard, glorious work. You can and you must become interesting. You can and you must fill every auditorium in which you are called to stand. You can and you must do it by the sweat of your face and the fire of your soul. You can compass it;

you must. The needs of the world demand it.

You must grow from largeness to largeness; from strength to strength; from one degree of ability and skill to another.

You are challenged to use this power in the highest service of man; to discuss the great themes of destiny and successful living; to bring men face to face with their better selves and their higher possibilities; to make them see God and enthrone Him in their work-aday lives.

You are challenged to secure the best education that diligence, persistence, the schools and universities can give; to work hard for years before your real life-work begins, so that when you step forth to the duties of the master profession it shall be with the tread of a young giant; to hold yourself to the enthusiasm of your early choice through all the grind and grime of thorough preparation; to let no other alluring profession entice you from the path to the master profession. Money, fame, earthly power—what are they? You

are on your way to a throne to sit with the Master of the universe and share His plans and His power and His victories. You are to set loose the potencies of creative energy to make a new earth and a new heaven wherein dwell righteousness, peace, joy and love. This challenge will test the warp and woof of your being. If you are not the real thing, you will fall out by the way.

You are challenged to lead the church into its larger work, into its conquest of the world as territory to be held and as meal to be leavened. You are to lead it out of the crudities of a narrow evangelism into the harmonies of an evangelism that is the art of saving all men for service and all society for its better, larger, completer life.

You are challenged for the leadership of men—men whose strength has gone to business and the lower politics for want of leadership to a larger business outlook and the greater politics. The twentieth century needs a religion that touches all life and exalts it;

reaches all men with a stronger manhood; sets free all the best forces for play in the affairs of men.

You are challenged to enter a new order of the ministry; to preach not in nice sounding phrases to tickle the fancy, but for results; to mingle with men as a man not for "hail-fellow-well-met" reasons, but to lead them to a fuller manhood.

You are challenged to present to the needs of this century a great, compelling personality that shall speak through every vibration of your vocal chords and through every quivering of excited muscles the message of life, present and everlasting life.

You are challenged to a ministry so vital and growing that it shall know no dead-line in time; and when you are indeed dead one that will speak on in memory and life forces.

You are challenged to a work of faith that shall sow beside all waters and on all kinds of ground, and not mind the harvest until it comes.

The master profession is waiting for the master in it. No other has such possibilities, such power, such effectiveness, such rewards, such abounding satisfaction, such approval of God.

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